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SIPDIS

ECA FOR COLOMBIA BARROSSE AND BOB KEITH  
SCA/PPD FOR MERRIE BLOCKER AND JESSICA PFLEIDERER

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KPAQ](#) [KZ](#)  
SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: 2009 RHYTHM ROADS REQUEST

1. Embassy Astana wishes to request American musicians through the Rhythm Road program in 2009. Post's application is keyed to the questions outlined in State 90853.

--Preferred Music Style: American roots music (country western or bluegrass)

--Preferred Timeframe: Spring 2009, March-April (first choice) or January-February (second choice). We have no black out dates. A visit during Kazakhstan's long winter months would generate particularly good audience turnout.

--Priority Objectives: The preservation and promotion of traditional music is a visible part of Kazakhstan's effort to build a modern nation with a strong sense of history and national identity. By exposing Kazakhstani audiences to our cultural heritage through American roots music, we will increase U.S.-Kazakhstani understanding. There are similarities between instruments traditionally used in American roots music, such as the guitar and fiddle, and traditional Kazakh instruments, such as the dombra and kylkobyz. Both musical traditions also share some similar themes, such as the importance of wide open spaces.

--Audiences: USG alumni recently approached us to express a particular appreciation for this type of music and an interest in sharing it with a wider Kazakhstani audience. In addition to USG alumni, our target audience would also include music students, professors, and the Kazakh-speaking general public. We have previously hosted a number of very well received jazz and classical musicians, but have not exposed Kazakhstani audiences to American roots music.

--Possible Venue Institutions: The National Academy of Music (Astana), Zhastar Palace (Astana), Conservatoire (Almaty), Baiseitova and Zhubanova music schools (Almaty), Museum of Musical Instruments (Almaty), Music College (Aktobe), West Kazakhstan Folk Orchestra (Uralsk), Music School (Uralsk). All of the music schools mentioned above have faculties that specialize in traditional Kazakh music. We would also consider organizing a joint concert with the national Kazakh ensemble "Magic of Nomads," the first Kazakh group to record an album at London's Abbey Road studio ([www.magicofnomads.kz](http://www.magicofnomads.kz))

--Possible Venue Cities: Astana, Almaty, Aktobe, Uralsk.

--Security: Kazakhstan is a stable country; we do not anticipate any particular security concerns.

Milas